

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

VIOLET VARONA-LUKENS
Executive Officer



February 14, 2005

TO: Supervisor Gloria Molina, Chair
Supervisor Yvonne B. Burke
Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky
Supervisor Don Knabe
Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich

FROM: Violet Varona-Lukens
Executive Officer

SUBJECT: **BOARD MEETINGS ROTATED AND CONDUCTED IN
EACH SUPERVISORIAL DISTRICT/ALTERNATIVE
MEETING PROPOSALS**

At the November 3, 2004 Board of Supervisors' meeting, Supervisor Antonovich introduced a motion directing the Executive Officer to schedule all Board meetings falling on the fourth Tuesday of the month to be conducted in a different Supervisorial District beginning with the Fifth District.

On motion of Supervisor Burke, the Board unanimously approved a substitute motion that instructed the Executive Officer, in consultation with the Chief Administrative Officer and Chief Information Officer, to prepare a report addressing: 1) the feasibility and potential costs of implementing Supervisor Antonovich's proposal to schedule all Board meetings falling on the fourth Tuesday of the month to be conducted in a different Supervisorial District beginning with the Fifth District; 2) alternative ideas to the once-a-month rotational Board meetings, such as holding a town hall meeting once a year in each Supervisorial District targeted to issues that may be important to a particular community; 3) evening meetings held in the Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration; and 4) the use of technology to allow greater public participation in the meeting process through the establishment of remote sites set up with video conferencing equipment.

The attached report includes the findings of our review of alternative approaches for maximizing public access to Board meetings. A key finding is that State law requires county boards of supervisors to conduct regular meetings at the county seat. This requires, therefore, that your Board's regular meetings be conducted at locations within the City of Los Angeles, which would not allow us to site these meetings at locations in incorporated cities located at the County's geographic boundaries. This requirement does not apply to special meetings or video conference/teleconference locations, as discussed further in the attached.

Scheduling Regular Board Meetings at Alternative Sites

As your Board is aware, scheduling Board meetings at locations other than the Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration would require an extensive planning and coordination effort on the part of my staff and other County departments, such as the Sheriff's and Internal Services Departments, which assist us in conducting Board meetings, as well County departments whose items would be pending Board action. There would be additional costs associated with the activities identified in our report; however these costs would depend in large part on the locations selected by your Board for these meetings and, therefore, total costs cannot currently be determined.

Changing the location of the regular fourth Tuesday Board meetings would be even more challenging because the public hearing meetings have more complex notice requirements that need to be satisfied far in advance of the scheduled meeting. Therefore, should the Board decide to proceed with off-site Board meetings, we would recommend rotating meetings other than the one held on the fourth Tuesday.

Town Hall Meeting

Periodic Town Hall meetings held, for example, once annually in each Supervisorial District, would still involve significant planning and notice requirements and the potential costs associated with off-site meetings. However, these would be lower than the alternative of monthly meetings, given the fewer number of off-site meetings and the focus on specific issues which would reduce the number of affected County departments. Further, as special meetings, the Town Hall meetings could be held anywhere in the County.

Evening Board Meetings

Based on our review, the alternative which requires the fewest changes to implement is the proposal to schedule regular Tuesday Board meetings in the evening. While the day and time of regular Board meetings is reflected in the County Code and Rules of the Board, these could be changed simply by action of your Board. Evening meetings could be considered as a pilot on a quarterly basis and expanded to monthly, as appropriate, based on our experience during the pilot period.

Videoconferencing

Available technology exists which would allow members of the public to attend and participate in Board meetings from alternative locations in the County, while continuing to hold the meetings at the Hall of Administration; however these options are potentially costly.

Estimates provided by our current contractor and from the Chief Information Office (CIO) range from \$550,000 to \$850,000 in start-up costs for equipment and installation in the Board's meeting room and 5 permanent, off-site locations. Additional, ongoing costs are estimated by our current contractor at \$4,000 monthly, while an estimate of these ongoing costs is not currently available for the CIO's option. The potential monthly cost of televising Board meetings originating from different locations throughout the County is estimated by our current contractor at \$11,000 monthly.

In conclusion, a more detailed cost analysis on the abovementioned meeting options will be developed based on further direction from your Board. Please let me know if you have any questions regarding the information provided in this report.

VVL:RG

Attachment

c: David E. Janssen, Chief Administrative Officer
Jon W. Fullinwider, Chief Information Officer
Raymond G. Fortner, Jr., County Counsel

**REPORT ON ROTATING A BOARD MEETING TO A
DIFFERENT SUPERVISORIAL DISTRICT EACH
MONTH/ALTERNATIVE MEETING PROPOSALS
February 14, 2005**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

<u>Heading</u>	<u>Page No.</u>
I. Offsite Board Meetings Held on the Fourth Tuesday of the Month	
A. Legal Requirements	1
B. Security Requirements	2
C. Scheduling/Announcement Requirements	2
D. Logistics Requirements	3
E. Transportation Requirements	5
II. Alternative Meeting Options	
A. Town Hall Meetings	6
B. Evening Board Meetings	6
C. Videoconference/Teleconference Meeting Proposals	7

REPORT ON ROTATING A BOARD MEETING TO A DIFFERENT SUPERVISORIAL DISTRICT EACH MONTH/ ALTERNATIVE MEETING PROPOSALS February 14, 2005

I. Offsite Board Meetings Held on the Fourth Tuesday of the Month:

Currently the Board meetings held on the fourth Tuesday of each month are reserved for public hearings on zoning matters, special district proceedings, property transactions and fees, etc.; Supervisor motions; items continued from previous meetings by the Board; and Department items with time constraints that are authorized for placement on the agenda by the Chair of the Board.

Rotating these meetings from District to District involves considerable preparation and staff time away from the office, as was evidenced recently with your Board's November 15, 2004 Special Meeting to consider the reduction of trauma services at Martin Luther King, Jr./Drew Medical Center (Beilenson Hearing).

The following location, scheduling, and personnel issues must be considered prior to conducting meetings outside of the Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration:

A. Legal Requirements:

1. Government Code Section 25081 requires that your Board conduct its regular meetings at the County seat. Government Code Section 23619 defines the County seat as Los Angeles. Therefore, without changes to State law, any additional location(s) for the Board's regular meetings must be within the boundaries of the County seat. (This restriction does not apply to special meetings or videoconference/teleconference locations which will be discussed later in this report.)
2. County Code Section 2.36.070 and the Rules of the Board will need to be amended to reflect any changes to the time, place and location of the Board's regular meetings.
3. Pursuant to Brown Act requirements (Government Code Section 54954.2), the agenda must also be posted at these remote meeting site(s) at least 72 hours in advance of the meeting. This would involve additional costs, such as staff driving to the site to comply with posting requirements.

**REPORT ON ROTATING A BOARD MEETING TO A
DIFFERENT SUPERVISORIAL DISTRICT EACH MONTH/
ALTERNATIVE MEETING PROPOSALS**

February 14, 2005

Page 2

B. Security Requirements:

1. Sergeant Steve Wheatcroft has indicated only Sheriff Deputies from the Security Operations Unit would be assigned to secure the remote Board meeting locations. The number of deputies required for a Board meeting depends on the location and the matters appearing on the agenda. Additional security procedures would also need to be developed to provide for the safety of Board members and other personnel. These procedures may include Board member and staff briefings prior to the scheduled meeting. This may require adjustments to work hours for the deputies assigned to these remote meeting site(s). Finally, Sergeant Wheatcroft indicated that his Unit's expenditures are charged against the Superior Court's budget. However, if these rotational offsite meetings became part of the Board's regular meeting schedule, the County would likely be billed for these costs. As an alternative, Sergeant Wheatcroft indicates that it may be more feasible for the Board to meet in the evening at the Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration since security measures are already in place.
2. Office of Public Safety officers currently assist with securing the Board meetings. These officers would be responsible for transporting and setting up the metal detectors and screening all visitors entering the meeting room. Upon conclusion of the meeting, the metal detectors would then need to be taken down and returned to the Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration for the next Board meeting.

C. Scheduling/Announcement Requirements:

1. The Executive Office would consult with each Board office to secure an appropriate site within its District on an ongoing basis that can accommodate the current staffing and space needs for Board meetings, including an additional private room for the Board to meet in closed session.
2. The Board meeting calendar with locations identified for each Supervisorial District must be updated and finalized several months in advance of the meetings to ensure all persons involved in the public hearing process receive proper notice.

**REPORT ON ROTATING A BOARD MEETING TO A
DIFFERENT SUPERVISORIAL DISTRICT EACH MONTH/
ALTERNATIVE MEETING PROPOSALS**

February 14, 2005

Page 3

3. The Executive Office would need to advertise the Board's rotational meeting schedule in community papers in each Supervisorial District at a cost that would be determined by the size of the notice and publication costs of the selected newspaper. The Executive Office would update all information regarding the Board's meetings on the County's Internet and Intranet sites as well as all booklets published by this office. The appropriate notice would also be posted on the official bulletin board located outside the Hearing Room on Temple Street.
4. Depending upon locations selected, the County may need to enter into a rental agreement for use of the facility which could include lease/use fees. Los Angeles City meeting rooms may be an option to consider. Any proposed location must have the appropriate seating for Board members and for individuals who would testify; adequate space to accommodate County staff; adequate space to accommodate a large audience; and must be in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Access to the County's data network must also be considered or the ability to establish remote access. Actual costs can be determined once we receive further direction from your Board.
5. Potentially changing the meeting starting time to begin later than 9:30 a.m. to accommodate set up for these meetings, especially if it is at a location a great distance from the Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration.

D. Logistics Requirements:

1. Audio Equipment Setup Requirements:

ISD's Audio technicians are experienced with traveling to different venues and setting up their equipment for various functions. Upon consulting with the technicians, the following information was submitted:

- a. ISD Audio technicians require advance access to the meeting venue, preferably the day before or at least two hours prior to the start of the meeting to set up their equipment.
- b. A dedicated phone line would be required for broadcasting the audio of the Board meeting throughout the Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration and the Board of Supervisors' field offices.

**REPORT ON ROTATING A BOARD MEETING TO A
DIFFERENT SUPERVISORIAL DISTRICT EACH MONTH/
ALTERNATIVE MEETING PROPOSALS**

February 14, 2005

Page 4

- c. The estimated fee for two technicians to set up their equipment prior to the meeting, operation of the equipment during the meeting, and break down of the equipment after the meeting is \$3,648.00 per meeting. This figure does not include the technicians' overtime pay if they work past their scheduled work day.
- d. The language translation devices would be ordered through ISD by Executive Office personnel but will be taken to the location by the Audio technicians.

2. Special Event Equipment Setup Requirements:

If the location selected requires special set up of tables, chairs, podium, extension cords, skirts for the tables, flags, ropes to reserve seats and other miscellaneous equipment, Executive Office personnel would need to make arrangements with ISD's Facilities Operations. This service was provided for the recent Beilenson Hearing at a cost of \$992.00.

3. Televising the Offsite Board Meetings:

Our current contractor, Network Television Time, Inc. (NTT) prepared the attached preliminary proposal (labeled Option #1) to televise these meetings. NTT technicians would require advance access to the meeting venue similar to the Audio technicians for set up and time afterward to break down their equipment. Based on their recent experience televising the Beilenson Hearing, NTT has estimated that the offsite meetings would result in an additional cost of approximately \$132,000 annually or \$11,000 per meeting. This does not include broadcasting the Board meeting live on the internet and intranet which is not available through this proposal.

- 4. Rental of such equipment as photocopy and/or fax machines may be required for these offsite meeting locations.
- 5. At a minimum, one Spanish language translator would be needed for each meeting. In most instances, the need for an interpreter is not known in advance of the Board meeting.

**REPORT ON ROTATING A BOARD MEETING TO A
DIFFERENT SUPERVISORIAL DISTRICT EACH MONTH/
ALTERNATIVE MEETING PROPOSALS**

February 14, 2005

Page 5

6. Miscellaneous supplies/equipment would need to be provided such as an easel to accommodate the large Regional Planning maps, nameplates, badges, tablets, pens and pencils, the public speaker sign-in sheets, the time clock, various stamps and forms, water and food items, and a laptop computer to prepare the Held Item List.
7. At least six Executive Office employees would need to attend the offsite meetings to set up and then clean up the meeting room, assist the public with information and signing up to address the Board, and to monitor the meeting for preparation of the Held Item List, the minutes and the Statement of Proceedings. Depending on the length of the meeting, including set up and clean up, it may be necessary for staff to work longer than their scheduled work day.

E. Transportation Requirements:

1. Transportation and/or parking arrangements for the Board members and deputies would need to be coordinated with the site manager as well as security.
2. Transportation and/or parking arrangements for at least 6 Executive Office employees would need to be coordinated as well as transporting the necessary supplies/equipment for the conduct of the meeting.
3. Transportation and/or parking arrangements for other County department staff involved in the public hearing meetings may need to be coordinated (e.g., the Departments of Regional Planning and Public Works, Chief Administrative Office, including the photographer taking photos during the presentations, and County Counsel).

Should your Board decide to move forward with rotating a Board meeting to be held in a different Supervisorial District, we recommend that the Board select an alternative Tuesday to the designated public hearing meeting because the public hearing meetings have more complex notice requirements that need to be satisfied far in advance of the scheduled meeting. In addition, these meetings often have a significant number of people to testify regarding projects of high interest within specific communities. As an example, at the recent King/Drew Beilenson hearing it was difficult to locate a facility in the Second District to accommodate the large audience that attended the hearing.

REPORT ON ROTATING A BOARD MEETING TO A DIFFERENT SUPERVISORIAL DISTRICT EACH MONTH/ ALTERNATIVE MEETING PROPOSALS

February 14, 2005

Page 6

II. Alternative Meeting Options:

A. Town Hall Meetings:

As an alternative to rotating the fourth Tuesday Board meetings to a different Supervisorial District each month, Supervisor Knabe suggested the Board consider an annual or semi-annual town hall meeting in each District. Supervisor Yaroslavsky suggested the Board consider holding a small number of meetings per year targeting issues important to a particular community.

Your Board could hold a Special Meeting in each Supervisorial District on an annual basis or as needed utilizing a "Town Hall" format to discuss an issue particular to the community or to all of your constituents. The meetings would be noticed and an agenda published in compliance with the Brown Act. Similar to the recent Beilenson Hearing, arrangements would be made through this office, in consultation with your staff to secure an appropriate meeting site. Arrangements could also be made to televise the meeting. This option, while still requiring extensive planning, poses less of a problem than the public hearing meetings because the agenda topic would be focused more on a single issue rather than multiple issues that may require many Department Heads or their assistants to be available at the meeting. Finally, these meetings could be held anywhere in the County not just within the boundaries of the County seat.

B. Evening Board Meetings:

As a way of reaching your working constituency, another alternative would be to schedule one of the monthly Tuesday Board meetings in the evening or less frequently such as one evening meeting per quarter. Notices informing the public of the regular evening meeting time would be prepared. All documents referencing the Board meeting times would be revised as well as notices placed on the internet and intranet sites. The County Code and the Rules of the Board would also need to be amended to reflect the evening meeting schedule. For staff involved in the Board meeting process, working hours may be adjusted to avoid the use of overtime whenever possible. Evening Board meetings held in the existing Board Room will not require additional equipment or extraordinary security measures.

**REPORT ON ROTATING A BOARD MEETING TO A
DIFFERENT SUPERVISORIAL DISTRICT EACH MONTH/
ALTERNATIVE MEETING PROPOSALS**

February 14, 2005

Page 7

C. Videoconference/Teleconference Meeting Proposals:

As an alternative solution to rotating the meetings from District to District each month the following proposals are presented for your consideration:

1. Our current contractor, Network Television Time, Inc. (NTT) prepared the attached preliminary proposal (labeled Option #2) to allow members of the public to attend and participate in Board meetings from alternative locations within the five Supervisorial Districts. Each remote location would have permanently installed equipment to facilitate the viewing of the live Board meeting and provide for the ability of the public to participate in the meeting. This proposal would be in compliance with the Brown Act (Government Code Section 54953(b).)

NTT's estimated start-up costs would be \$675,000, not including the addition of a 20% (\$130,000) contingency fund. The total monthly operational costs would be approximately \$4,000 for increased engineering and production staff time. This estimate does not include any costs for rental of facilities, staff attendance, set up, clean up, parking, etc.

2. The Chief Information Officer also submitted the attached summary of a proposal prepared by Spinitar, a leading local audio/video systems integrator, which has done previous installations for the County (labeled Option #3). This proposal provides for a complete integrated videoconferencing audiovisual system solution for the Board's Hearing Room and strategic offsite locations within each Supervisorial District.

This option, as well as NTT's, would allow your constituents to address you face-to-face without the need to travel into downtown Los Angeles. Three options/costs are presented for display systems for the Board's Hearing Room ranging in cost from \$206,645.10 to \$453,053.06. Four options/costs are presented for setting up the remote sites depending on if it is a large room or small room environment ranging in cost from \$66,132.31 to \$80,264.65. This estimate does not include any costs for rental of facilities, staff attendance, set up, clean up, parking, etc.

**REPORT ON ROTATING A BOARD MEETING TO A
DIFFERENT SUPERVISORIAL DISTRICT EACH MONTH/
ALTERNATIVE MEETING PROPOSALS**

February 14, 2005

Page 8

3. Offsite teleconference site(s) could be established to provide the public with access to the Board meetings through the use of special teleconference equipment allowing for voice only communication with the Board at the meetings held at the Hall.

To proceed with implementing remote videoconferencing sites, permanent meeting locations would have to be identified in each Supervisorial District and connected to the County data network. Teleconference sites would have to have a dedicated phone line for the audio transmittal of the meeting and public testimony. Pursuant to the Brown Act, the agenda format would need to be revised to reflect the additional videoconference/teleconference location(s). The agenda would also be posted at those remote locations. The Rules of the Board would be amended to include the additional locations and the locations would need to be ADA compliant. If one of these options becomes popular, the locations may need to accommodate a large audience. Finally, these videoconference/ teleconference locations could be anywhere within the County, not just within the boundaries of the County seat.

Just as with holding the Board meetings off site, staff would still need to be present at all videoconference/teleconference locations to coordinate the speakers with the agenda items; ensure that the equipment is functioning appropriately; and to assist the Audio technicians back at the Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration to prevent the feedback and echo that could occur in the public address system. Also, security personnel would need to be present to maintain order.

Attachments

Information Provided by:
Bruce Arditte, Network Television Time, Inc.
On December 27, 2004

Option #1

Televised Board Meeting originating from different location within each of the five (5) districts

This option would provide for the televising of Board Meetings from different locations throughout the County. A recent similar service was provided to the County by NTT for the televising of the King Drew hearing. This option does not utilize pre-determined locations and permanently installed equipment, but provides the County the flexibility to change locations from week to week, or month to month.

Estimated Cost: \$11,000 additional costs per Meeting/Broadcast incurred as a result of producing Board Meeting broadcast from different and various locations throughout County.

File: remote board meeting options

Remote Televising Services
Provided by:
Network Television Time, Inc.

Information Provided by:
Bruce Arditte, Network Television Time, Inc.
On December 27, 2004

Televising of Board Meetings

Available Options for Remote Meeting/Broadcast Services

Option #2

Televised testimony from all five (5) districts

This option would allow members of the public to attend and participate in Board Meetings from locations within the five Board districts. Each remote location within each district would have permanently installed equipment to facilitate the viewing of the live Board Meeting and the ability to participate in the Board Meeting.

Estimated Cost:

Start-up Installation:

- \$100,000 per remote location for equipment installed in each district.
- \$50,000 control room/board room upgrades.
- \$25,000 per remote location for installation engineering.

Grand Total Start-up =\$675,000

Monthly operations:

- \$4,000. in additional operational cost related to increased engineering staff time and increased production staff time.

**Grand Total Monthly Operations:
\$4,000**

Option #3

Board of Supervisors Remote Meeting Proposal

The proposed design is to provide a complete integrated videoconferencing audiovisual system solution for the Board of Supervisors Hearing Room and strategic off-site locations throughout the County. The purpose of these systems is to provide the convenient capability, utilizing current technology, for the Board's constituents to address the Board of Supervisors, face-to-face, without the need to travel great distances into downtown Los Angeles from all over the County. This solution is the alternative solution to rotating the meetings from District to District each month.

The proposal is for a complete room audiovisual solution for the Hearing Room including room display systems, room input systems, integrated videoconferencing, system matrix switching for data/video/program audio inputs and necessary infrastructure. A control system in the existing Audio Control Booth will be programmed to receive off-site location requests for next in line questions to the Board. The Control Booth personnel will be able to control "next-in-line" question and answer capability, and call up locations of priority onto the videoconferencing systems providing organization and equality over the existing County data network. An audio and video feed will be provided from the remote locations to the existing broadcast system.

On the podium, the visual displays for the Supervisors will be the same regardless of what the selected large room display solution option. The Supervisors will view 3 large LCD displays mounted on the rear the desks facing them. A video camera mounted in the rear of the room will provide the video image of the Board to the remote locations.

There are 3 options for a large display system for the audience in the Hearing Room to view the remote image. Those options, and the total cost of the Hearing Room portion of the system with that display option and one year of a service contract are as follows:

1. A dynamic rear screen 6-units high x 4-units wide video wall solution. The entire wall size would be approximately 14.5' wide by 12' high and 20" deep. This solution will require a structure support standing approximately 50" off the Boardroom floor directly behind the Supervisor's desks replacing the existing worn projection screen.
Hearing Room with option 1 display = **\$453,053.06**

2. This rear screen solution provides a 16' by 9' image but requires at least 54" of depth. It would be mounted approximately 7' above the floor surface behind the Supervisors' desks. Hearing Room with option 2 display = **\$321,950.16**
3. This option is for front projection to a new 16' wide x 12' high screen behind the Supervisors. A high resolution video projector will be mounted from a ceiling beam between 32' and 80' from the screen in the Hearing Room. Hearing Room with option 3 display = **\$206,645.10**

The Hearing room system can also be used for video conferencing from non-County locations such as state or federal agencies and can be used for local video or computer based presentations.

There are (4) proposed off-site room solutions, each a different application based on the room size. The difference with each of these (4) solutions is the display utilized for the room; otherwise, the basic solution is the same. Each room will have an audio system, video conferencing equipment and camera, wireless microphone system, and a control system panel. In addition to Board meetings this equipment can be used for other purposes by County departments for internal video conferencing meetings and presentations.

In Large Room Environments one or two LCD projectors will be used with a 100" diagonal ceiling recessed electric projection. The screens and projectors will be controlled through a control system, both locally and from the Control Booth at the Board Hearing Room.

In Small Room Environments one or two high resolution 50" wall mounted plasma monitors will be used. Dual systems will be mounted side by side with the camera in the middle.

Cost for each type of remote site, including one year service contract is as follows:

Large Room Environment – Dual Front Projection Display = **\$80,264.65**
Large Room Environment – Single Front Projection Display = **\$69,151.86**
Small Room Environment – Dual Plasma Display = **\$74,894.11**
Small Room Environment – Single Plasma Display = **\$66,132.31**

In addition to the one time equipment and installation costs, there are ongoing costs to be considered such as security at each remote facility, staff to coordinate the speakers with agenda items, and, at least for initial use, a technician to ensure equipment operation.

The small room environment with the single plasma display could be made somewhat portable for use at different locations. Every location must be connected to the County data network.

This proposal was prepared by Spinitar, a leading local audio/video systems integrator, which has done previous installations for the County.

Submitted by Dennis Shelley
Chief Information Office
January 27, 2005